

Legal Resource Index on Westlaw & Lexis

“Cheat Sheet”

This is an overview of the features of *Legal Resource Index* (LRI) on Westlaw and Lexis. To learn about features not discussed here, and for help and advice specific to your research, call 415.422-6773 or contact a research librarian via <http://legalresearch.usfca.edu/ZiefResearchHelp>.

Coverage and Content

On Westlaw and Lexis, *Legal Resource Index* covers 1980 to the present. (For periods between 1908 and 1980, use *Index to Legal Periodicals* on the web (<https://www.usfca.edu/library/legalperiodicals>). For periods before 1908, use *Index to Legal Periodicals* in print (K 33 .I54 Law Reference).

Legal Resource Index on Westlaw and Lexis has the same content as the web version, [LegalTrac](#). It contains citations to / descriptions of articles in law journals and other legal periodicals. *Legal Resource Index* itself *does not have full-text articles*, but Westlaw *will* link to articles that are available on Westlaw.

Access

Legal Resource Index is available only to researchers who have individual Westlaw and Lexis passwords. At USF access is limited to law students, law faculty, and law staff. (LegalTrac, another version of *Legal Resource Index*, is available to the entire USF community at: <https://www.usfca.edu/library/legaltrac>.)

Log-in

Log on to Westlaw in the usual way.

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| Westlaw: | Type “Legal Resource Index” in the search box, then select “Legal Resource Index (Electronic Companion to Current Law Index)” from the “Looking for this?” choices. |
| Lexis: | Go to http://legalresearch.usfca.edu/FindingArticles/Indexes , and follow the link to “Legal Resource Index - Lexis Advance” |

Search Options

There are five main options: Keyword; Subject; Case Name; Statute Name; Author.

You can limit all types of searches by date, by jurisdiction, by the addition of other terms, or by combining two (or more) types of searches in one search request. Examples of each type of search are on the next page.

Westlaw stores searches for one year in the “History.” Lexis stores searches for 90 days in the “History.”

Display of Results

Westlaw and Lexis display citation lists and detailed, full citations. Westlaw supplements this citation information with links to the full text of the article when the article is available on Westlaw.

Printing, Saving and E-mailing

Westlaw allows: printing to an attached printer; e-mailing results; downloading results; saving results to Dropbox, or sending results to a Kindle reader. Lexis allows: printing to a Lexis printer or attached printer; e-mailing results; downloading results; or saving results to Dropbox.

Limiting by Date

Follow these examples to add a restriction to your other search terms:

- Westlaw: **and date(after 2014) — or — and date(before 2000) — or — and date(is 2015)**
 (Use the “advanced:” (“adv:”) search option when adding date restrictions.)

On Lexis, use the Timeline after you run your search to restrict your results by date.

Specific Searches Useful for Legal Research or Preemption Checking

Key Word Search

Simply enter any key words, *e.g.*,

euthanasia — or — "trade dress" — or — trademark and "domain name" — or — sex /s discrim!

You can use “Boolean” operators (AND, OR, NOT) and “proximity connectors” (/n —where n is a number of words), /s, /p, etc.). In LRI, you’re searching brief documents, so “AND” is often an effective connector. So this search, to find articles about students’ First Amendment rights and school dress codes, works well:

"first amendment" AND uniform OR "dress code" AND school

(In full text law review articles, by contrast, this search would retrieve hundreds of articles.

Westlaw searches without proximity connectors will probably run as natural language searches. To run any Westlaw search as a “terms & connectors” search, start your search with “advanced:” (“adv:”), *e.g.*,

advanced: euthanasia and privacy — or — adv: euthanasia and privacy

Regular plurals are retrieved automatically. Use ! to retrieve all forms of a word (*e.g.*, discrim!).

Subject Search

Using valid *Legal Resource Index* subject headings, (*e.g.*, right to die) follow these examples:

Westlaw: adv: index("right to die")

Lexis: term("right to die")

You can take your best guess as to likely subject headings, or you can use this method: after running a keyword search, scan the subject headings used within particularly relevant article citations, then plug these terms into a new search using the “index” (subject heading”) field, as shown above.

Author Search

Follow these examples, asking to retrieve the author’s last name within two words of the first name.

Westlaw: adv: author(wildman /3 stephanie)

Lexis: wildman w/3 stephanie

Case Name Search

Follow these examples—for when you know one party’s name or two parties’ names, or when a party’s name is a multi-word phrase:

Westlaw: adv: summary(case /s oncale) — or — adv: summary(cruzan and director)
 — or — adv: summary(case /s "compassion in dying")

Lexis: oncale — or — cruzan /s director — or — "compassion in dying"

Statute Name Search

Follow these examples. It is useful to add a date restriction when dealing with controversial laws.

Westlaw: summary(statute /s "americans with disabilities")

Lexis: statute-name("americans with disabilities")

Limiting by Jurisdiction

Follow these examples to add a jurisdiction limit to your search. This technique is fairly reliable on Westlaw, but a little less so on Lexis.

Westlaw: and summary(jurisdiction /s california) (use an “advanced” search)

Lexis: and calif! — or — and "european union"

Combining Types of Searches

On Westlaw, you can combine any and all types of search. (For example, you can combine statute name and keyword searches.) On Lexis, you can combine Subject and Keyword searches.

Westlaw: adv: summary(statute /s "americans with disabilities") and alcohol!

Lexis: term(torture) and interrogat!